

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1-18 (canceled).

Claim 19. (previously presented): A capping head device for application of a cap to a container, comprising:

a casing having an end mouth designed to fit on the container so as to define a closed chamber;

a capping head disposed within said chamber, said capping head directly contacting the caps so as to apply the cap to the container; and

means for connecting said closed chamber with a source of vacuum for the purpose of communicating said vacuum to the space inside the container before the end of application of the cap on the container, said connecting means being configured to control fluid communication between said closed chamber and said source of vacuum in direct dependence on the relative axial position of said casing with respect to said capping head,

wherein said casing is mounted on said capping head so as to be movable therewith towards and away from the container, and that said closed chamber is defined by said casing when the casing engages the container as a result of the lowering movement of the capping head onto the container,

wherein said casing is mounted on the structure of the capping head with interposition of rolling bearings and has its end mouth made in an end wall that is elastically compliant within the casing, and wherein

said connection means comprise valve means set between the structure of the casing and the structure of the capping head,

said valve means comprising a valve body rigidly connected to the casing and mounted to be axially slidable with respect to a valve element, said valve element being mounted with interposition of the aforesaid rolling bearings on the structure of the capping head.